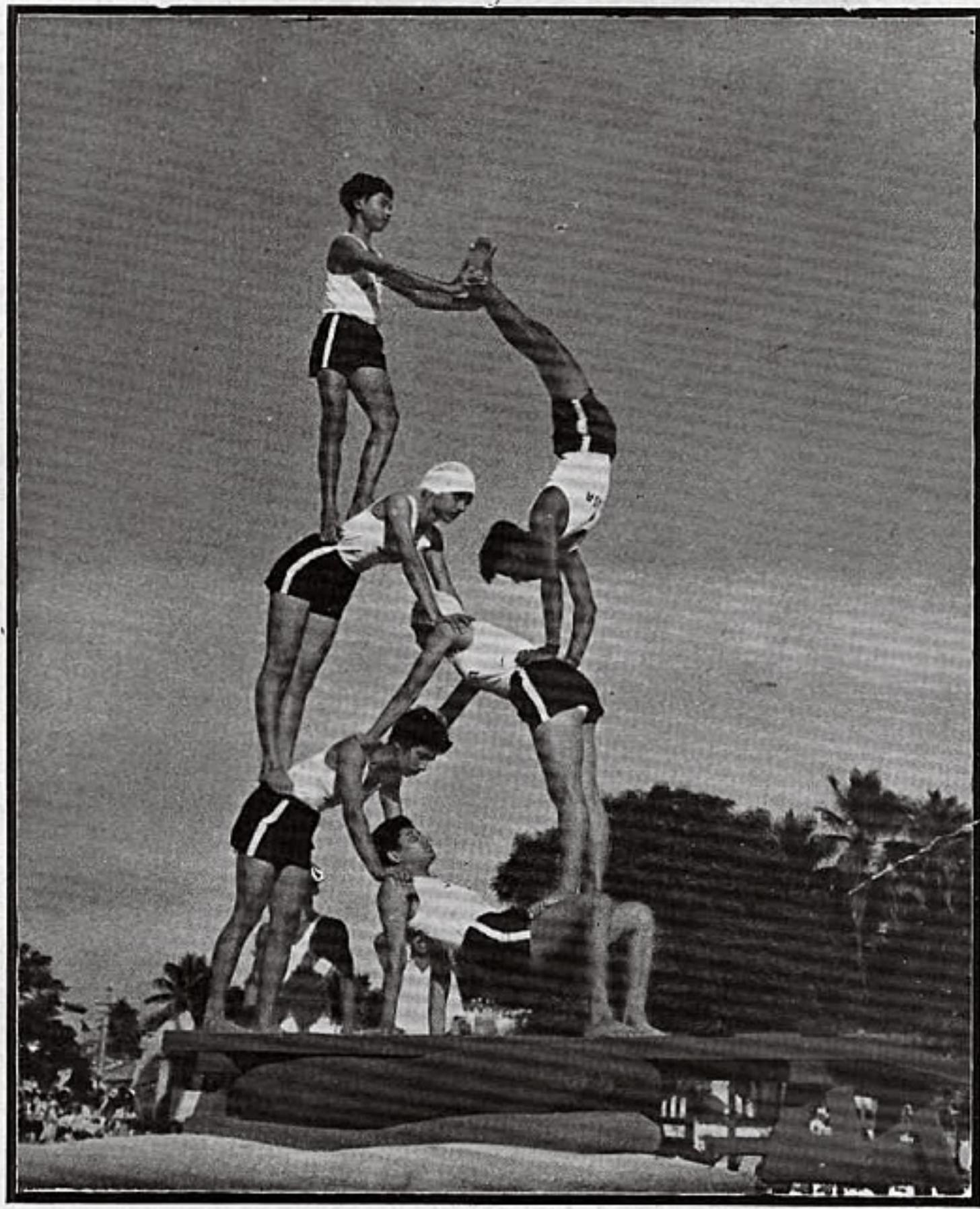


# CHANDAMAMA

MAGAZINE FOR THE YOUNG

1st March 1966

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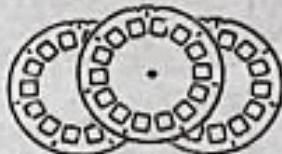


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## CONTENTS

STORY-POEM	...	2
THE AGGRESSOR (JATAKA TALE)	...	5
THE COMET (SERIAL)	...	9
DISILLUSIONED POET	...	18
MORTAL ENEMIES	...	20
THE ELIGIBLE SUITOR	...	29
MOTHER AND DAUGHTER-I	...	33
THE SECOND DEFEAT	...	41
ONE IN A MILLION	...	46
ANCIENT ANIMALS	...	48

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# CHANDAMAMA

*Controlling Editor : CHAKRAPANI*

THE duty of a ruler is to solve the problems of the people and keep them contented and happy. But an aggressor is always more interested in torturing the populace and extending his authority.

In the Jataka Tale, "Aggressor", Shilava lives up to the highest ideal of a ruler. Even the bandits love him. But the King of Kosala comes as an aggressor and Shilava teaches him that, when one king conquers another he should do so only to rule the people better. Having learnt the lesson the aggressor withdraws, preferring friendship to victory and conquest.

MARCH  
1956

VOL. 2  
NO. 3



## THE FROG DRUMMER

*A snake once wanted  
To hold up a cart,  
So that the people  
Would think he was smart.*

*To publicise the event  
He thought that he should  
Enlist the services  
Of some one who could*

*Beat the big drum  
And so he approached*



*A frog to whom  
The subject he broached.*

*"This is just the job  
That I could perform,"  
Said the frog, "I'll take  
The whole world by storm!"*

*Indeed an expert  
Drummer he was!  
He rent the air  
With his shouts and guffaws.*

*Enthused by the frog's  
Non-stop din*





*The snake advanced  
And placed himself in  
The midst of the road ;  
But the passing cart  
Ran over the snake  
And killed him on the spot.*

*Still the frog clamoured  
In ignorant bliss.  
He went on drumming ;  
Not a note would he miss !*

*The birds flew down  
And ate up the snake*

## Story Poem

*And cleaned up the ground.  
But the frog would make*

*His croaking noise,  
And so the birds  
Ate him alive  
Saying these words :*

*" All fiendish sounds  
And poems must  
Be wiped out when  
The tyrants are crushed."*



## THE FRONT COVER

AT one time there was a terrible fight between the Devas and the Danavas. In this war the Devas were completely routed for want of proper leadership.

Indra, the lord of the Devas went to Brahma and asked him, "O Father, tell me by which means we can find a good commander to lead us to victory in war." To which Brahma replied : "Son, only one who is born of the spirit of *Soma*, the Sun and the Fire can lead you in war and bring you victory."

Indra took leave of Brahma and went to the *Saptarshi* who were busy with a great *Yajna* by the performance of which the Devas were to obtain victory. Agni, the God of Fire, was the most important person for the *Yajna*. Lord Shiva was also invited to take part in the *Yajna*.

Thus all the elements that were necessary for the birth of a war leader for the Devas were brought together. Lord Shiva ejected from his third eye six rays which Agni collected and carried to the banks of the Ganges. There the six rays of Lord Shiva took the form of a boy whom the six Krithikas mothered and brought up with immense care.

This boy was called Skanda. He was also called Karthikeya after the Krithikas who mothered him and Kumara, the son (of Lord Shiva).

Even in boyhood Skanda was very valorous. He could tame wild elephants and chop off a mountain peak with an arrow.

When Skanda was of age, Indra brought a girl called Deva-Sena (which means the army of the Devas) and married her to Skanda on the sixth day of the moon—a day which is still considered to be Skanda's favourite day.



## THE AGGRESSOR

WHILE Brahma-dutt ruled Banaras, Bodhisatva was born as his son. Brahma-dutt named his son Shilava.

In course of time Shilava became the King of Banaras. He ruled the people justly and made them happy. When some persons committed theft or other crimes because of poverty, dire need or ignorance, the king did not punish them. He called them to him, gave them the money they needed, and taught them how to live correctly. Due to this not only crime became less and less but also the people began to love their king.

The kingdom of Kosala was across the border of the kingdom of Banaras. The Minister of Kosala thought that Shilava was a

weak king. He told the King of Kosala, "Your Highness, the King of Banaras is afraid of punishing even bandits. It should be easy for us to conquer him."

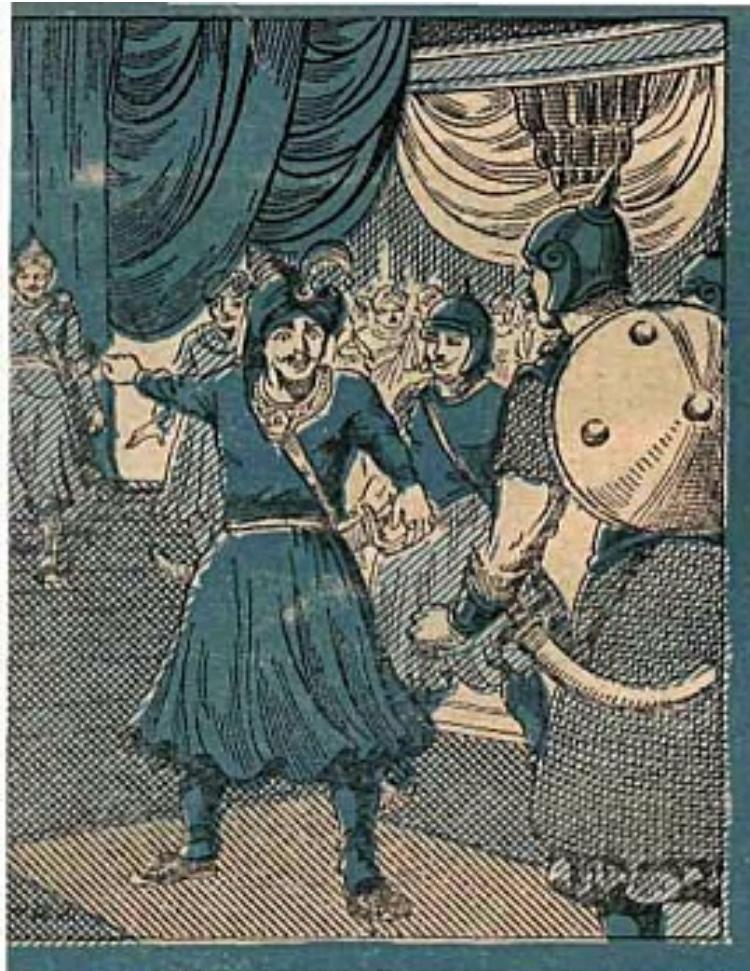
The King of Kosala wanted to test the strength of Shilava. He ordered some of his soldiers to cross the border and loot some of the villages of Banaras.

When these soldiers tried to loot the villages, the villagers caught them and presented them before King Shilava.

"Friends," said Shilava, "You look like strangers. What made you attack our villages?"

"O King," the soldiers replied, "We were prompted by hunger."

"You could have come to me and got what you wanted," said Shilava. He got some money



from his treasury, distributed it among the soldiers of Kosala, and sent them away.

When the King of Kosala learnt what happened he was convinced that Shilava was a weakling. Still he wanted more confirmation. So he sent a bigger contingent of soldiers to destroy a few towns in the Banaras state.

But the people of Banaras were very alert. They caught the soldiers again and presented them before the king. The king once again gave them money and sent them away.

The king of Kosala was now quite convinced that he could conquer the King of Banaras. He marched his armies on Banaras. When the ministers and army chiefs got news about the march of the armies of Kosala upon their kingdom, they went to the king and said to him, "Your Highness, the King of Kosala is coming to attack us. Evidently he is not aware of our strength. Kindly issue an order for preparations of war."

Shilava detested war. "Let there be no blood-shed. Let them have Banaras if they want it. Keep the doors wide open for them," he said.

"You need not come like enemies," he sent word to the king of Kosala, "Come like friends. You are welcome." This message convinced the king of Kosala still more that Shilava was quite an incapable person.

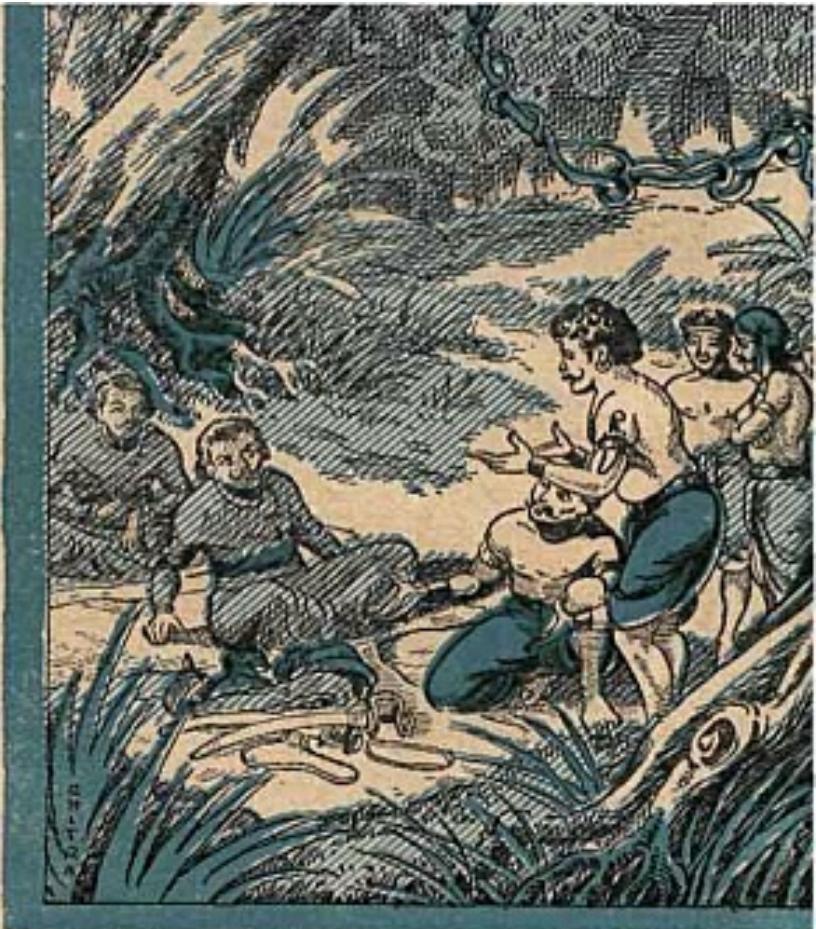
The king of Kosala was incapable of correct behaviour. The moment he entered the Court of Banaras he ordered his men to arrest Shilava and his ministers.

"This is not proper behaviour on the part of guests," Shilava protested. The king of Kosala only laughed loudly in reply.

Shilava and his officers were deprived of their insignia and were changed into common clothes. They were warned to leave the capital before sunset. If they failed to do so the penalty was death.

Accordingly Shilava left the city with his ministers and entered the forest before it was dark. For the night they rested in the forest and went to sleep without food.

At about midnight they were disturbed from their sleep by the arrival of several bandits with torches. The bandits said to the king, "O King, we had been bandits. But because of your goodness we could live honestly all these years. But our troubles start from now. So, this night we looted the palace and brought back these things. Here are your dresses and ornaments and swords. Here is food for you from the palace. Eat the food,



wear the dresses and tell us what we should do with the rest of the booty."

Shilava and his ministers ate the food and put on the dresses. "You should have found out how the new king proposes to solve your life problem. Return all this loot to the king and ask him to show you a way of living," Shilava advised the bandits.

"Sire," the bandits replied, "one who is treacherous to his host cannot have any sense of justice. We shall never acknowl-



edge that scoundrel as our king. You are still our king. Show us the way."

"If you refuse to return this loot," Shilava said, "it shall be my duty to do so."

Accompanied by his ministers Shilava turned back and reached the court by next morning. The enemy king was surprised to see Shilava back in his royal robes.

"You have been warned to leave the city," he said to Shilava. "Why are you here still, courting death?"

Shilava told the new king what all had happened, and then added, "O King, there is no doubt that you deprived me of my throne with the only idea of ruling the country better. The poor, ignorant bandits did not realise it, and in their foolishness they

robbed your palace. I promised them that you would solve all their problems, and brought back your properties."

The king of Kosala was strangely touched. He fell at the feet of Shilava and lamented, "O Great One! Even the bandits love you! Your behaviour is so exemplary! Yet I could not appreciate such fine things. I was led astray by my wicked minister who has no understanding, and I deprived you of your kingdom. I do not want it any more. Take it back. It is enough if I can have your lasting friendship. Pardon all my sins!"

Shilava agreed to take back the throne. He kept the King of Kosala and his forces as his guests for some days and then sent them away.





CHITRA

## 9

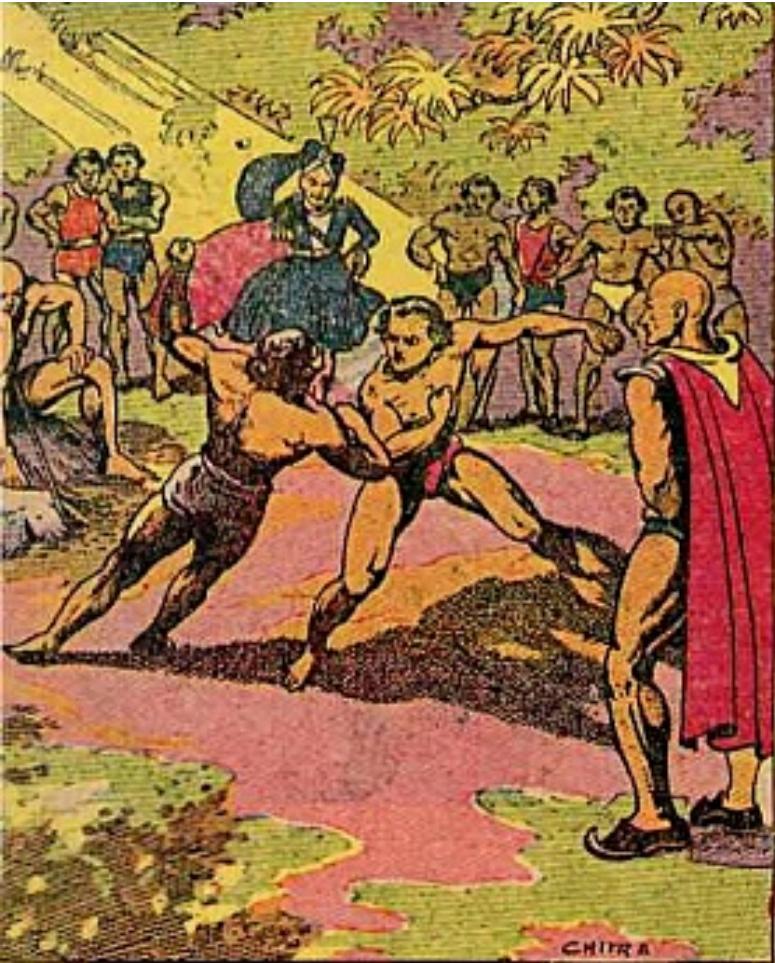
(Four-eyes turned out to be friendly towards Samarsen. This was a great boon to Samarsen and his men who found only danger in every nook and corner of the Isle of Sorcery. Four-eyes was telling Samarsen how Sakteya was ordered by Goddess Chandika to build a temple for her.)

SAMARSEN was greatly intrigued by what Four-eyes was telling him. It was indeed very strange that Goddess Chandika should ask for a temple of silver and gold instead of one of mortar and stone. For it was no joke to build a temple of silver and gold.

"Four-eyes," said Samarsen, "I cannot for a moment under-

stand why Chandika asked her devotee, Sakteya, for such an impossible thing."

Four-eyes laughed and said, "Samarsen, you are not aware of the implications of the *Sakti* cult. Only those who thirst for unlimited joys of the world and for power over other human beings take to *Sakti* worship. Before the Goddess endows her



CHITRA

votaries with the necessary powers, She puts to severe test not only their courage and confidence but also their deep devotion to Her. She put our King, Sakteya, to a really hard test."

"Could he procure all that silver and gold?" Samarsen asked.

"That is what I am going to tell you. That ship there with all its wealth and the mermaid keeping watch over it are parts of that story. He did make a



tremendous attempt but it all ended there." Four-eyes pointed at the ship in the sea.

Four-eyes laughed softly and went on, "The rivalry between me and One-eye is also linked up with this story. As I told you, Sakteya took upon himself an almost impossible task. He wanted all the gold and silver in the world and he had to get it by looting other countries, even as you did.

"So Sakteya began scouring the country for youth to fill his army. He got hold of bold and sturdy young fellows to join him. He went to each and every village, gathered all the youth, arranged competitions in sword-play, wrestling and *lathi* games, and selected those that came out successful.

"I was a youth of twenty at the time. One-eye here was about the same age and also we came from the same village.





"Our quarrel started much earlier, though, when we were mere kids. It has grown with time, until today it is the sole cause for this island remaining unfit for human beings to live in. By the way, One-eye was not always one-eyed. It was my creature, the owl, that brought on him this condition.

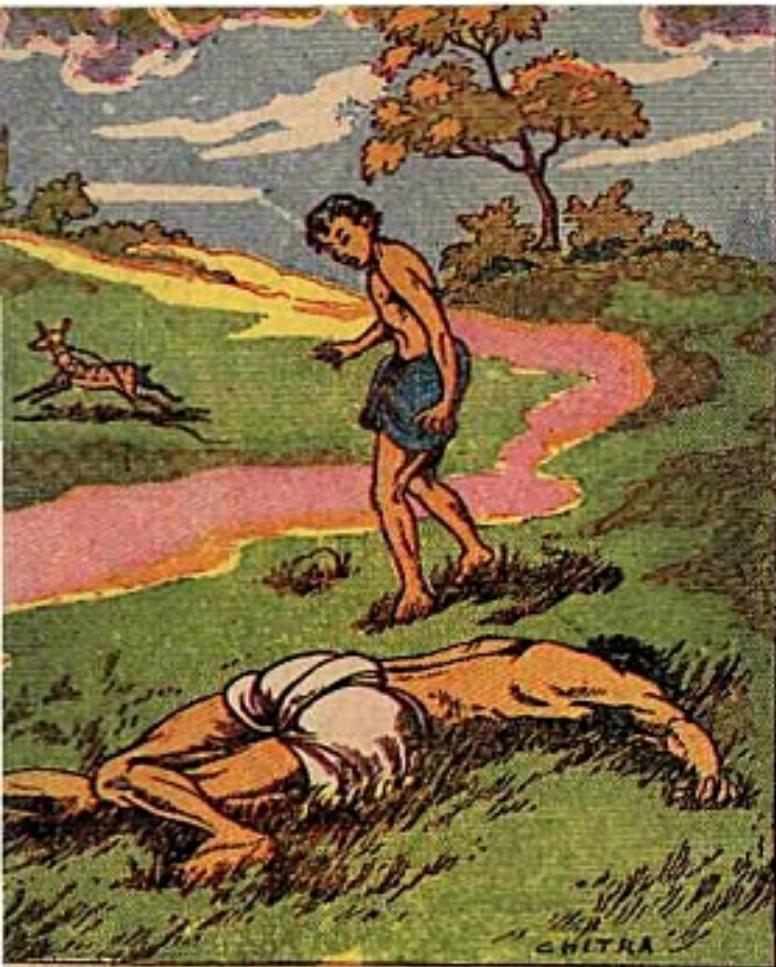
"Well, as I was saying, One-eye and myself were born in the same village. We were neighbours too, which was enough cause for rivalry. Most of the

time we behaved like enemies rather than friends.

"At the age of six we were engaged to herd the goats of our village elder. We took the goats to the forest every day for grazing. Being very young we were not allowed to hunt in the forest. Only grown-ups and sturdy people were permitted such games.

"One day we drove the goats into the forest as usual. You must know, the forest was by no means a safe place. Lions, tigers





I jumped up and ran to it. But One-eye too saw it and ran after me saying, 'I saw it first!'

"But I was the first to catch the deer-kid. I put a rope round its neck and pulled it after me. Then One-eye attacked me. I got wild. He was always like that, wanting what others had. And I hated him for it. In my anger I took a stone and hit him on the head. One-eye uttered a shriek and fell down.

"In the meantime, the kid began to run away with the rope. I ran after it into the thick jungle and at last I caught it. But I was tired out and somehow managed to hang on to the kid which still kept on struggling to escape.

"At this juncture I heard a lion roar nearby and my heart was chilled. I climbed up the nearest tree leaving the deer-kid below. I shouldn't have left the kid below. It sensed danger and began to bleat helplessly not

and other wild animals infested it. But it was the best grazing ground and we could not avoid it.

"Several of us goatherds sat together under a tree in the forest while the goats went on grazing. All of a sudden the kid of a deer came running towards the goats and began to bleat. It had evidently missed its mother and was searching for her amongst the goats.

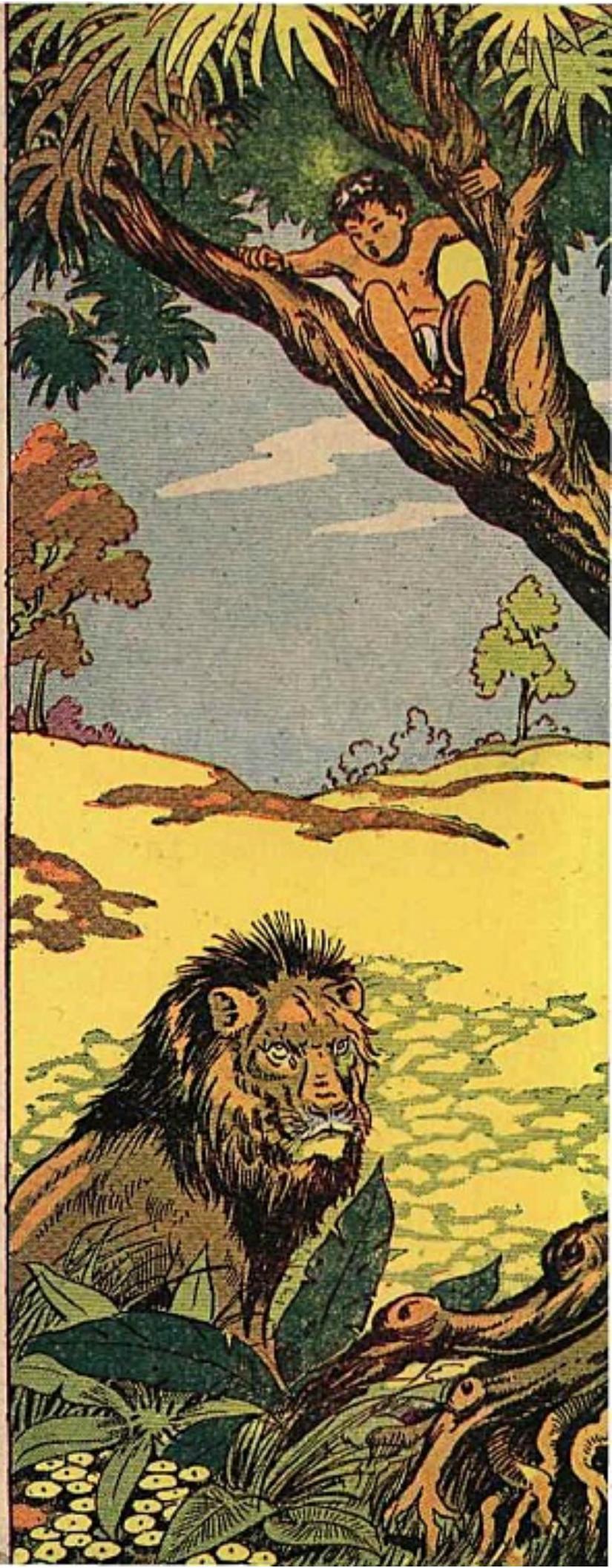
"The moment I set eyes on the lovely thing, I had a great desire to possess it and fondle it.

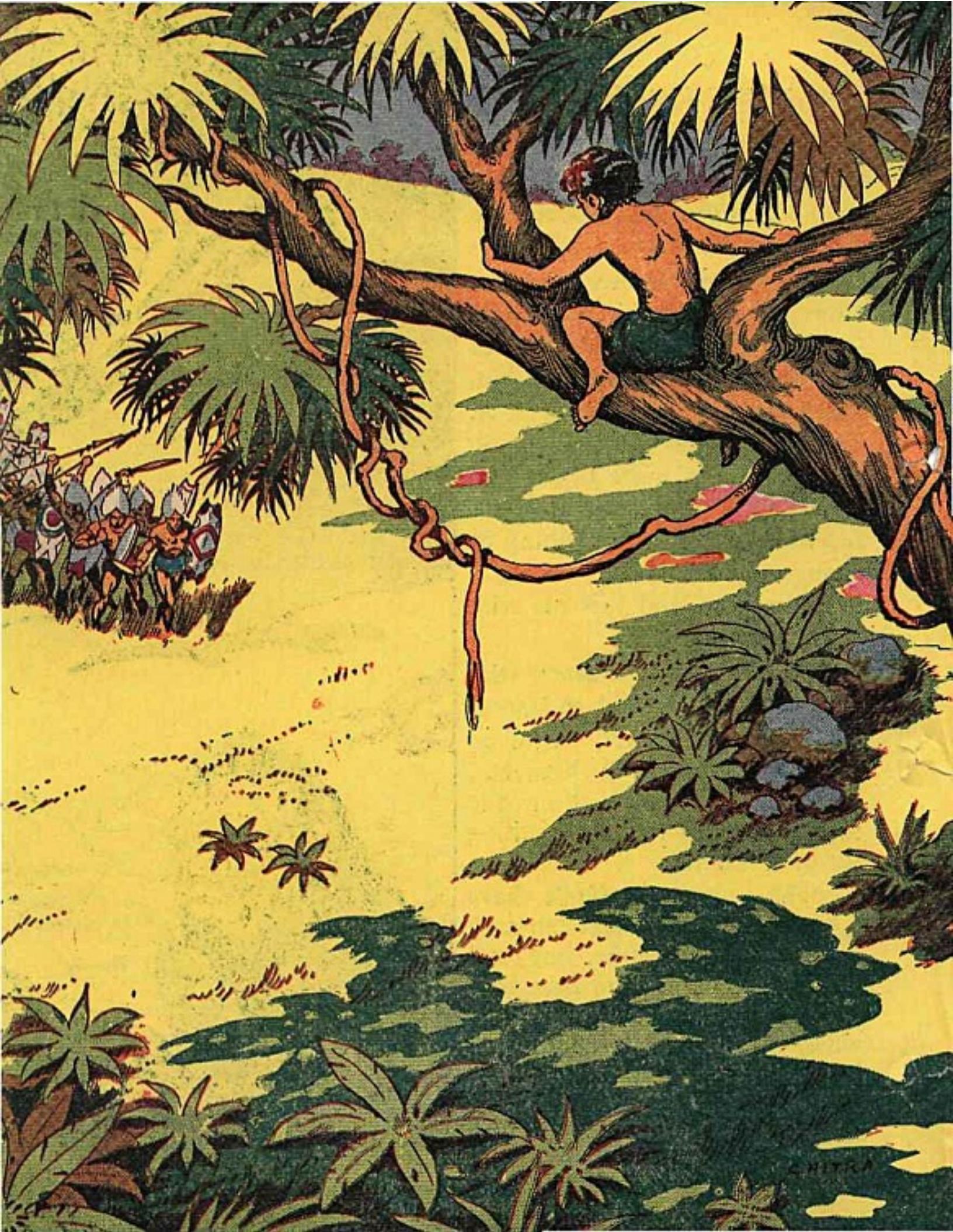
knowing where to hide. The foolish thing was only attracting the lion. Even as I feared, the lion did come there.

"Up in the branches I was free from danger. The kid was surely doomed. Still I could not see the vicious lion attack my kid, and I threw a dry branch at it. Thus I invited trouble upon myself. I was more brave than wise. I did not realise how this foolishness of mine was going to change my whole life. The lion lifted its head and saw me with cold, ferocious eyes.

"As soon as he finished with the kid the lion tried to leap at me. For more safety I climbed further up into the branches. Having failed to get at me the lion sat under the tree waiting for me till dark.

"That night I didn't have a wink of sleep. Next morning I found the lion gone, but I did not dare to climb down the tree. The beast might be hiding somewhere. I thought I could hear it growling.







"At about noon I heard the beating of drums. It was the villagers coming in search of me. I had not the least doubt about it. The other goatherds must have informed them that I was still in the forest.

"The drums were now quite near. I could climb down the tree and make a dash towards the villagers, but I was still wary of the lion. I waited.

"Presently I could see them, forty or fifty of them with spears, daggers and shields, beating the drums and shouting like hell. They were now within some fifty yards of the tree and my joy knew no bounds. And then the lion jumped amidst them.

"I did not misjudge the lion's cunning. It was hiding in the bushes nearby. But the villagers too were prepared for such a contingency; not one of them moved when the lion jumped amidst them. One able-bodied young man guarded himself with



his shield when the lion tried to hit him while another caught it firmly by the tail. The lion snarled and turned back upon him when the first young man stabbed the lion in the neck with his lance. Then the man holding the lion by its tail stabbed its back with his dagger. I was indeed very proud of my people. They were so brave and so clever!

"Soon the lion was pierced through and through by several of the villagers and it succumbed





and fell down. Now at last I was free. I gave a shout of joy and began to come down from the tree.

"What happened next was the most amazing thing in the world. No one in his senses could have believed it. When I shouted for joy all the villagers looked up at me for the first time. Instead of welcoming me with joy they stood there staring at me as though they had never known me. This One-eye who was beating a drum shouted, 'Ghost! Ghost!' And those brave people who fought a fierce lion without flinching in the least, also shouted, 'Ghost' and took to their heels!"

"How could so many people mistake you for a ghost? What was the reason for their behaviour?" Samarsen asked Four-eyes in surprise.

Four-eyes knit his brows, nodded his head and said, "That was the doing of One-eye. From this alone you can imagine what a vicious fellow he was even as a lad. He had told the villagers that he saw me killed by the lion. He convinced the entire village that I became a ghost. And it was the life of a ghost that I led for the next ten years, haunting the forests, without one living soul to claim me as his own."

*(To be continued)*

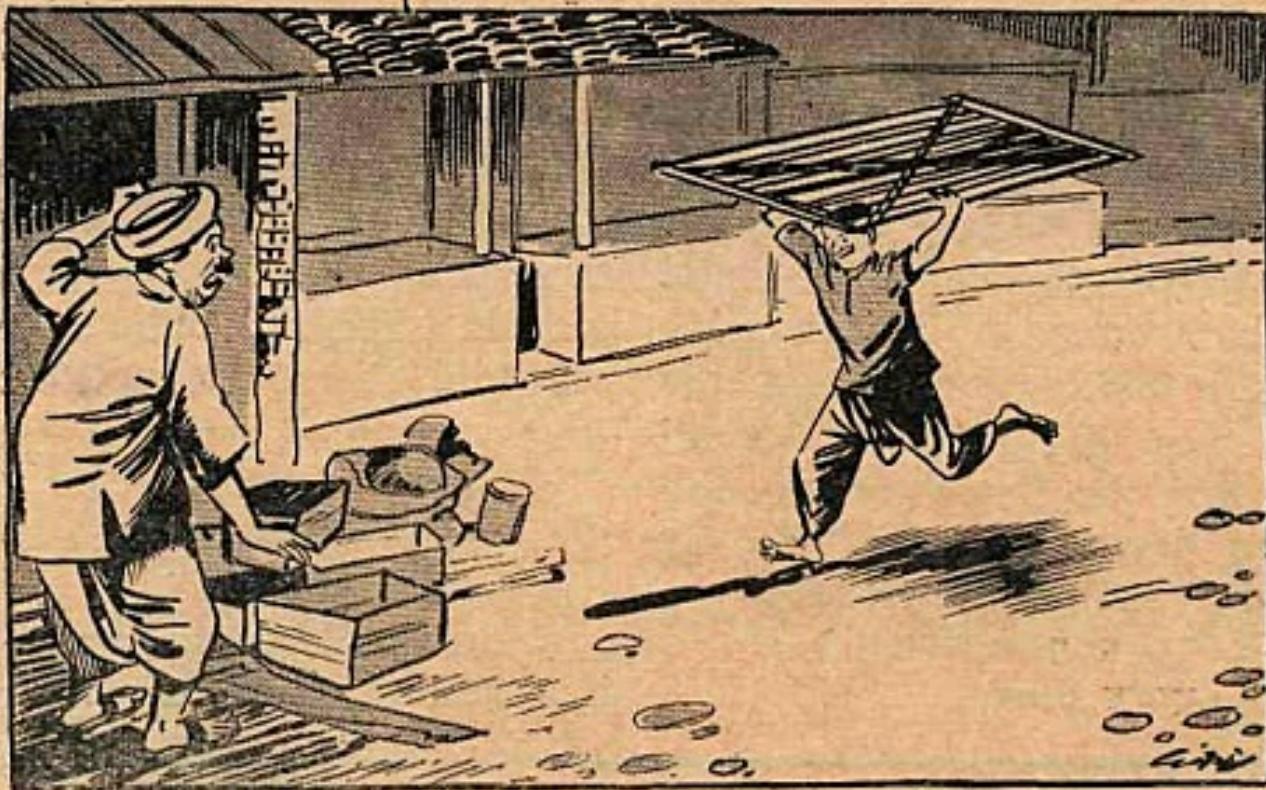


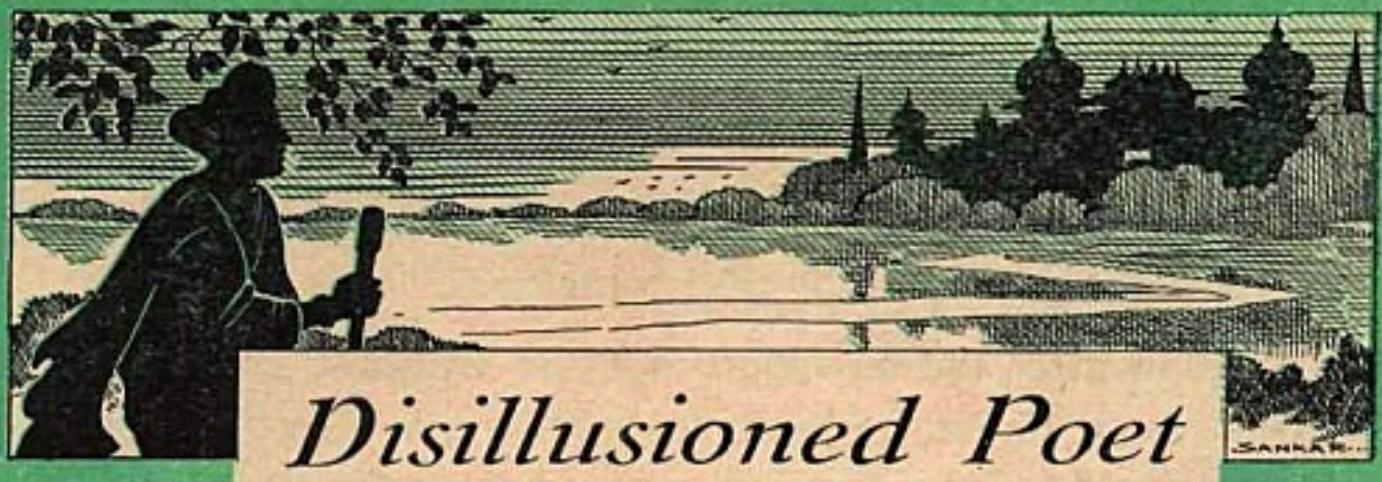
## GUARDING THE GATE

A certain merchant had to leave his shop to attend to some business. While going out he told the shop-assistant, "Guard the gate carefully till I came back."

Soon after the merchant left the assistant learnt that there was a dance performance going on in a certain place. The young fellow was anxious to go and see the dance. But his master had told him to guard the gate of the shop. So, he dug out the gate, and took it away with him.

Presently the merchant returned and found the shop looted, the shop-assistant missing, and the gate gone. He understood what happened when he saw the young man return carrying the gate and beaming with pleasure.





## *Disillusioned Poet*

THE fame of King Bhoja and the eminent poets of his court spread far and wide. But some people could not believe certain rumours which said that even the common people of Dhara, Bhoja's capital, were experts in clever versification. Poet Kanthi, a great scholar, started for Dhara with the sole aim of disproving these rumours.

The first thing Kanthi saw on entering the city of Dhara was the village well. He found several young women of the labouring classes taking water from the well and going away. Kanthi accosted the first woman and asked her, "Who are you, my child?" She promptly replied:

"हर हर स्मरते नित्यं,  
बहुजीव प्रपालकः"

अरण्ये वसते नित्यं  
तस्याहं कुल बालिका."

(I am the daughter of those who live in the woods, constantly take the name of Har and maintain life.)

She belonged to the community of peasants who cultivate the land from which the trees are cleared, drive the bulls crying "Harr! Harr!" and produce food which is necessary for life.

Kanthi was pleased with her cleverness. He stopped the next girl and asked her, "Who are you, my child?" And she replied :

"चतुर्मुखो नव ब्रह्मा,  
तृष्णालूढो न शंकरः  
अद्वाले वर्षते मेघः  
तस्याहं कुल बालिका."

(I am a child of those who live by that which has four mouths,

but is not Brahma, which rides a bull, but is not Shankar; and which gives water like a cloud in and out of season.)

This girl belonged to the water-carriers who ply their trade with a skin with four mouths.

The next woman replied to Kanthi's question thus:

“निर्जीवो जी बतो वामे  
श्व सोच्छ्वास विशेषतः  
कुदुम्ब कलहो नास्ति  
तस्याहं कुल वालिका ।”

(I belong to those who live by a thing which is lifeless and yet breathes the air in and out and never quarrels with the family.)

She belonged to the blacksmiths. Another girl told Kanthi:

“द्विराजा, नगरी एका  
नित्यं युद्धं च ज यते  
तदुत्पत्ति करोयस्तु  
तस्य हं कुल वालिका ।”

(A certain town has two kings who always fight each other. I belong to those who manufacture such cities.)

She was a carpenter's daughter. The city was the spinning wheel.

Yet another girl told Kanthi:

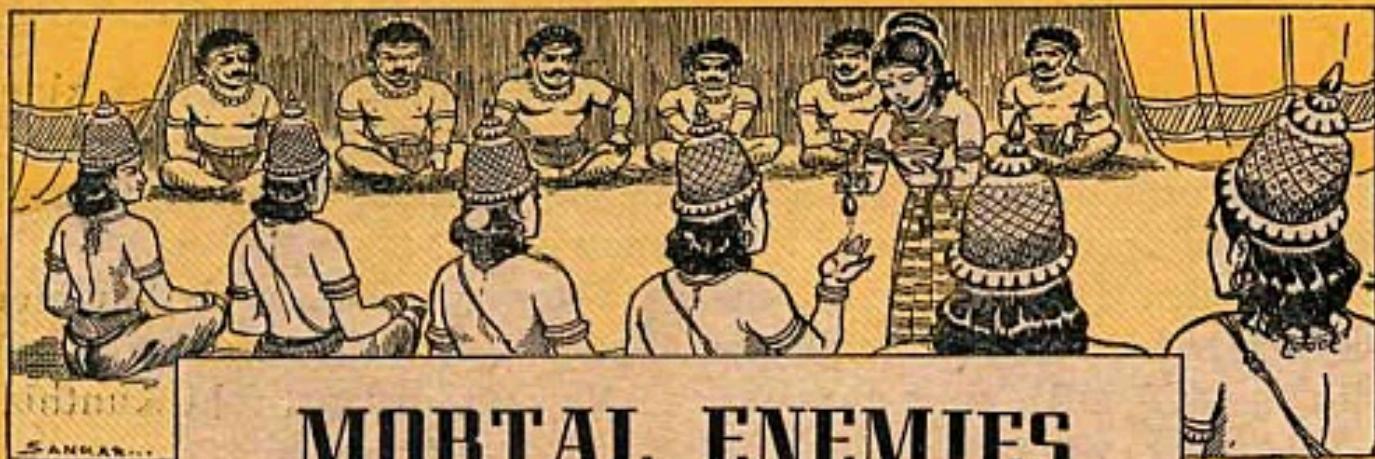
“चक्रकं नरथी सूर्यो  
भूमौ तिष्ठति सारथिः  
अगस्त्यतात् निर्मणः  
तस्याहं कुल वालिका ।

(I belong to those who manufacture the fathers of Agasthya the Rishi, with the help of a single wheel, the charioteer always standing on the ground.)

She belonged to the potters. The great Rishi, Agasthya, was said to have been born in a pot.

Poet Kanthi came to the conclusion that the rumours did not do full justice to the actual state of things in Dhara.





## MORTAL ENEMIES

UGRA-BHAT was the king of Radha. Manorama was his queen. They were a very happy and loving couple.

One day a troupe of performers from a distant place came to Radha and gave a show before the king. The theme was "Samudra-madhan". Both the Angels and the Demons churned the Ocean of Milk for the Nectar of Immortality. When they got it they began to quarrel as to how they should share it. Then Lord Vishnu turned himself into a divinely beautiful woman called Mohini and fooled the Demons. The part of Mohini was played by the daughter of the leader of the troupe, a really enchanting girl named Lasya-vati. The king was so impressed by the beauty

and talent of the girl that he wanted to marry her. Her father considered this a stroke of great luck and agreed to the marriage. Soon the actress Lasya-vati became the wife of the ruler.

In the course of time the king had two sons, one by the elder queen Manorama and the other by Lasya-vati. Manorama's son was named Bhim-bhat and Lasya-vati's son Samar-bhat. Bhim-bhat was the elder of the two.

As the boys grew up Bhim-bhat was always found to excel his younger brother in everything. So Samar-bhat developed jealousy towards his elder brother. One day they were wrestling and Samar-bhat intentionally hit his brother on the throat. Bhim-bhat got so angry that he gave

Samar-bhat a severe knocking. Samar-bhat fell down, bleeding from his nose and mouth. His friends took him to his mother.

Lasya-vati was terrified at the sight of her bleeding son and began to weep. The king came to her and learnt what had happened.

"Bhim never misses an opportunity to punish my son," she told the king. "Only, I didn't want to tell you. I'm afraid that one day he will kill my boy!"

The king was very fond of his young wife and her son. He could not bear to see her in tears. He sent for his elder son and told him that he must leave the palace at once and live somewhere else.

Queen Manorama was in tears when she heard this news. "My son," she said to Bhim-bhat, "This country is not safe for you. Nor is it necessary that you should take shelter under unknown roofs. Go to Patna and live with your grandfather. He has no sons and he will be very nice to you."

"What are you saying, mother?" Bhim-bhat said in



great heat. "Do you want me to run away from my own country for fear of this Samar-bhat? I am no milksop. He can do nothing to me, have no fear."

"All right, son," Manorama said to him. "You can have from me as much money as you want to engage guards to protect you and keep you company."

"No, Mother," Bhim-bhat replied. "If I do that I shall be considered to keep a private army in defiance of the king."

The common people blamed the king for having banished his

elder son from the palace. They had a very low opinion of the king's second son. They collected funds and provided Bhim-bhat with a decent house and several servants.

Though Bhim-bhat had the people behind him, Samar-bhat had the king himself to support him. With this knowledge he made several attempts to have Bhim-Bhat killed. A Brahman youth named Sankh-dutt resented these attempts.

This Sankh-dutt was of the same age as the princes. Though

a Brahman he was very courageous and valorous. He was a friend of both the princes. So, one day, he went to see Samar-bhat and said to him. "Why do you carry on this feud with your brother? You can never rival him. You are only earning a bad name by your attempts to harm him."

Instead of considering this bit of advice carefully, Samar-bhat became nasty towards his friend and called him foul names.

"I've tried to give you sound advice as your friend," Sankh-



dutt replied. "But you insult me. You insist upon looking on your brother as your mortal enemy. Well, in that case, consider me as an equally mortal enemy. I warn you, you'll rue it." Then Sankh-dutt went away.

Some days later a certain merchant brought a fine horse for sale in the city. Sankh-dutt came to know of it and settled the sale of it to his friend Bhim-bhat. Later Samar-bhat went to the merchant with his cronies and said to him, "I shall pay you

double what the other man is paying. Give me the horse."

"Sir," replied the merchant, "I cannot ignore the ethics of my trade. I've already agreed to sell it and I can't go back upon my word for the sake of more money."

"You are ethical, are you?" said Samar-bhat venomously. Then he turned to his friends and said, "What are you waiting for? Seize the horse!"

The gang forcefully got possession of the horse and departed. Bhim-bhat and Sankh-dutt





came to know of this atrocity. They confronted the gang of robbers and bullies with drawn swords and a terrible fight ensued. All the accomplices of Samar-bhat were killed in the fight and Samar-bhat himself took to his heels. But Sankh-dutt ran after him and caught him by the hair. As he lifted his sword to sever his head, Bhim-bhat came up and said sarcastically, "Don't kill him ! What will happen to his father if he dies ?" Samar-bhat thus escaped with his life.

He went to his father straight-away and told him that Bhim-bhat attacked and killed his friends, even tried to kill him and finally robbed him of the horse which he had bought.

Manorama came to know about the charge made by Samar-bhat against his son. She called a Brahman aside, gave him a pot filled with precious stones and said to him. "Kind Brahman, deliver this to my son. Tell him that he should leave the city to-night, at least for my sake. Let him go to my father's place. If he is seen here tomorrow he is sure to be put to death. Let him use this wealth to wreak his vengeance."

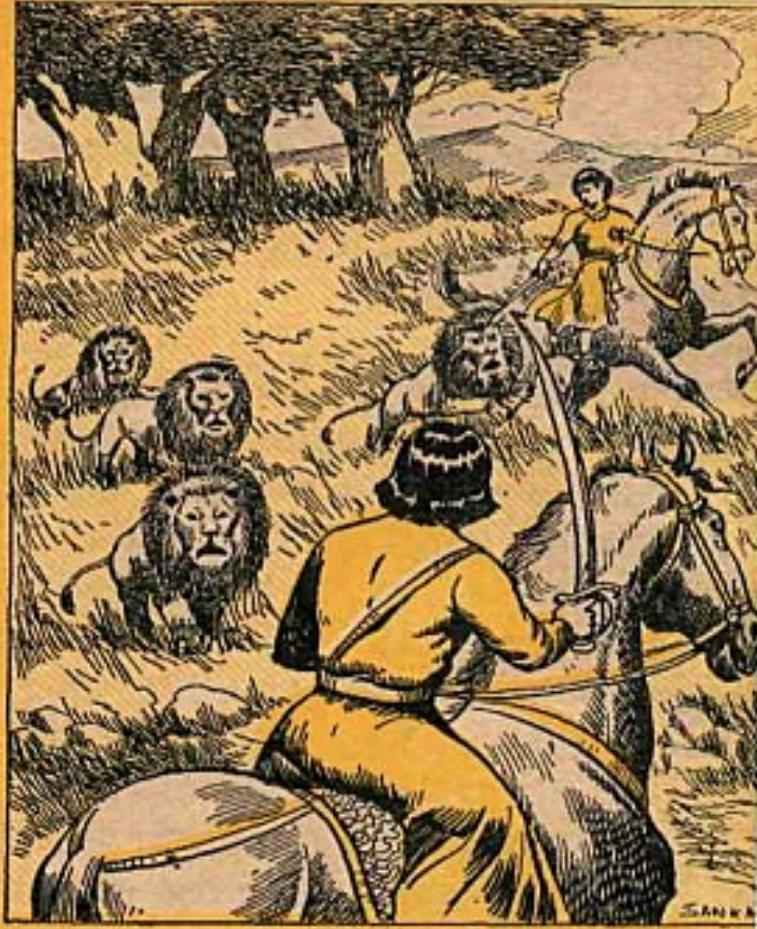
According to his mother's injunction, Bhim-bhat left the city that very night, mounted on his horse and taking the pot of precious stones with him. Sankh-dutt, his sworn companion, accompanied him on another horse.

By the following noon they entered bushland infested with lions. As they dashed through

the bush on their horses, some lions sleeping in the bushes woke up frightened by the noise, and attacked them. Both the young men put up a brave fight and managed to slay the lions but they lost their horses which were severely mauled by the lions.

Now they had to go on foot along the thorny paths. It would be dark soon and they might meet other lions. Under such conditions they walked the whole night and arrived at the banks of Ganges by morning.

The river was in floods. There was not a soul in sight and no means of crossing the river either. They walked along the bank till they came to a lonely cottage. There they saw a young man living in it all by himself. This youth had spent all his boyhood at Banaras in studies, and when he had returned to his native place he had found all his relatives dead. He wished to marry but he was so destitute that he could not find a wife. Disgusted with life he built a cottage and engaged himself in doing penance.



Having heard his story Bhim-bhat gave him the pot of precious stones and said, "Take this, my friend. It is only a dead-weight for me. Marry and be happy with this wealth."

Then the two friends boldly started to swim across the river. But the powerful current pulled them along with it. Bhim-bhat drifted with the current for a long time before he made the other bank of the river, and then there was no trace of Sankh-dutt to be seen. Bhim-bhat walked down the river in search of his

friend till he reached the kingdom of Lalat.

Bhim-bhat entered Lalat in the most destitute condition. He had lost his country, his horse, his money and even his bosom friend. Walking along a street, he saw a few men engaged in gambling. He offered to take part in the game and the others agreed, hoping to fleece him. But it was Bhim-bhat who fleeced the others. The gamblers, having lost all they had, rose to go. But Bhim-bhat stood in their way and said, "Friends, I am

no professional gambler. Take back your money before you go."

"Then," said they, "why on earth did you gamble with us?"

"To have your friendship," Bhim-bhat replied. "You see, I've no one in the world." The gamblers were glad to hear these words. They swore life-long friendship with Bhim-bhat.

After some time there occurred the annual celebrations of the Vasuki festival. Bhim-bhat roamed about the city with his friends, seeing the crowds and the festivities. At one place he



saw a very beautiful girl, learnt that she was the princess of Lalat, and wanted to marry her.

The friends dressed Bhim-bhat in gorgeous, princely clothes. They themselves put on dresses of rich courtiers and took him to the king. On learning that Bhim-bhat was the crown prince of Radha, the king of Lalat promptly agreed to give his daughter in marriage to him. Soon the marriage was celebrated.

Meanwhile, Sankh-dutt also managed to swim across the Ganges and kept searching for

his friend. It was the news of the marriage of the princess of Lalat that told him that Bhim-bhat was at Lalat. Bhim-bhat was ever so glad to see his long-lost friend again.

The king of Lalat had two daughters but no sons. So, Bhim-bhat became the would-be ruler of Lalat.

In course of time it was learnt that Ugra-bhat, the king of Radha was dead and Samar-bhat crowned himself king of Radha. Bhim-bhat sent a message to him saying, "Unworthy wretch! I



demand that you yield the throne to me, the rightful owner, or be prepared for war."

Samar-bhat chose war. Bhim-bhat called his friends and said to them, "Friends, I depend upon you to assist me in the prosecution of this war." They went among the people of Lalat and enlisted soldier volunteers on a large scale, and with this army Bhim-bhat marched upon Radha.

There was a fierce battle. The two brothers who were mortal enemies met each other in fight. They deprived each other of their vehicles, mounts and bows. Finally they flew at each other with drawn swords as though they were a couple of ordinary soldiers. Soon Bhim-bhat knocked the sword out of Samar-bhat's hand. He placed the point

of his sword against Samar-bhat's heart and the latter began to shake with fear of death.

"Fear not, coward!" said Bhim-bhat. "If you die what should happen to your dear mother who brought you up with such care and consideration? Go back to her alive."

Bhim-bhat now got the throne which was legally his. He honoured his friend, Sankh-dutt who led his armies to battle, and his friends who helped him to win the battle. He arranged the marriage between Sankh-dutt and the second daughter of the king of Lalat and gifted him with the throne of Lalat.

Samar-bhat could not live on an allowance where he had once ruled. So he went away to his uncles along with his mother.





# The Eligible Suitor

VIKRAM once again went back to the tree and got down the corpse. He put it on his shoulder and began to walk towards the burial-ground in silence.

"O King!" said the Bethal of the corpse. "I am sorry to have to put you to so much trouble. In order to lighten your task I shall tell you a small story."

On the banks of the Ganges (said Bethal) there was a village called Brahma-sthal. In that village there lived a Brahman named Agni-swami. He had a daughter, Mandara-vati by name, who excelled the fairies in beauty. While Agni-swami was contemplating the marriage of his daughter, three young men came to

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Stories of Bethal

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him suing for Mandara-vati's hand. All the three were equally determined either to marry her or die in case they failed to do so.

The three boys were equally qualified in every respect and poor Agni-swami could not choose between them. Even if he could, the two who were refused the hand of Mandara-vati were sure to kill themselves.

While Agni-swami was in this fix, the problem was solved for him in an unexpected manner. Mandara-vati fell ill and after a few days died of her illness. The

three youths lamented her death, took the dead body to the burial ground and cremated it with the proper ritual. One of the three stayed on in the burial-ground. Over the spot where Mandara-vati's body was burnt to ashes he put up a shade and lay himself down in the ashes of the dear departed, eating such food as was brought to him by people who cared to do so.

Another of the young men collected some of the ashes of the dead girl and went away to submerge them in the Ganges.

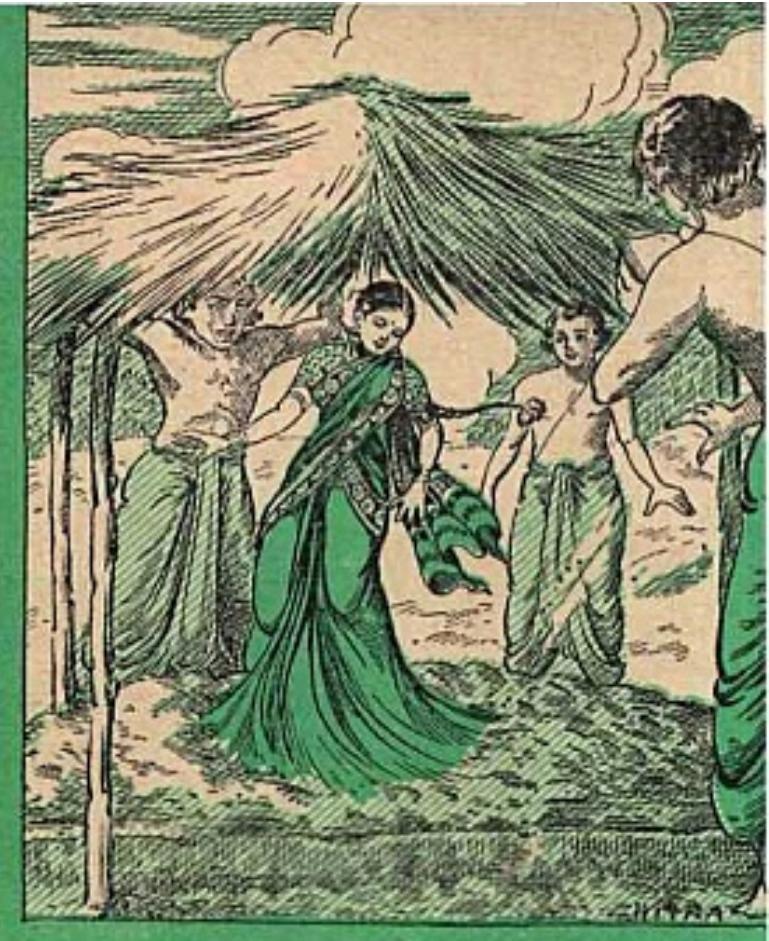
The third young man was so saddened by the death of Mandara-vati that he lost interest in everything and began to wander all over the land aimlessly. One day he reached a village and a Brahman invited him for food. As the Brahman and the young man were having the meal, the Brahman's infant son started crying. The mother tried her best to quieten the child, but in vain. In the end she got disgusted with the child and threw him into the burning fireplace.

At once the young man stood up and said, "I shan't eat! You are not human beings, but devils! I should be eternally damned if I accept your hospitality."

"O Sir!" said the Brahman protesting. "Don't draw hasty conclusions. We are not devils. Don't think that we do not love our child. We happen to have with us the secret of restoring life to the dead. That was why my wife threw the babe into the blazing fire."

But the young man would not believe a word of it. So the Brahman took a book hanging on a peg on the wall. He also took a pinch of dust. Having read out a magic chant from the book, he threw the dust on the dead child. At once the child came back to life without any traces of burning.

The guest was now thoroughly satisfied and he finished his meal. Now his mind was on the book hanging from the peg on the wall. He wanted it more than anything else in the whole world. That night, while the others were sleep-



ing soundly, the youth got up from his bed, took the book and departed.

By the time he reached the village of Agni-swami, the other youth who had attended to the submersion of Mandara-vati's ashes in the Ganges, also returned. Both of them went to the young man who was lying in the ashes of Mandara-vati.

The youth who stole the book told the secret to the other two. Then he took a pinch of dust, read the magic chant from the book, and threw the dust in the ashes.

At once Mandara-vati stood before them in all her beauty, not only alive but also completely cured of her illness.

The three youths took her to her father and again started quarrelling for her hand.

"I brought her back to life," said one.

"When she was dead I was the one who did what a husband should do. I carried out the submersion ceremony with her ashes," said another.

"Even in death I never left her. I've been hugging her ashes all the time and I've more right to become her husband than any one else," said the third.

Poor Agni-swami could not decide whose claim to the hand of his daughter was the greatest. Having finished the story Be-

thal said. "O King, of the three young men who was the most eligible to become the husband of Mandara-vati? The one who gave her life, the one who attended to the submersion ceremony or the one who hugged her ashes? If you know the answer and still do not speak your head shall split."

"He who gives life shall be deemed equal to a father," said Vikram. "And he who carries out the submersion of the ashes of an unmarried girl should be considered only as her brother. So the most eligible of the young men was the one who would not part from Mandara-vati even after her death."

The king's silence was broken and Bethal again returned to the tree with the corpse.





## Mother and Daughter

### 1

WHILE Harun al-Rashid was the Khalifa of Baghdad that city boasted of pigeon post. The man who conducted it was a great man. The Khalifa gave him one thousand dinars a month.

When this man died the pigeon post also came to an end. The Khalifa took back the carrier-pigeons, the forty negro slaves and the forty hounds which were in the service of the pigeon post.

The dead man had a wife called Delilah and a daughter called Zenab. Delilah made a petition to the Khalifa that she should be appointed in her husband's place and on the same salary, that the carrier-pigeons, the negro-slaves and the hounds

should be handed over to her and that she would run the post as efficiently as her husband had done. This petition was ignored.

A short while later the Khalifa thought fit to appoint two notorious robbers called Ahmad and Hasan as chiefs of the police. The Khalifa had made every possible effort to catch these robbers and failed. Finally he decided that it was wiser to appoint such clever robbers as chiefs of police, so that they could curb other thieves and robbers.

Delilah became furious. She said to her daughter Zenab, "If there is honour and wealth for swindlers and thieves in the land, it is time to show that we too



are capable of unsurpassed wile and cunning. I shall prove that this Ahmad and Hasan are not to be compared to me."

Delilah was old in years but still a great expert in deception and trickery. Zenab who was a chip of the old block was glad to hear her mother declare that Baghdad should resound with their exploits.

Delilah dressed herself up like a Sufi beggar, wore innumerable chaplets of beads, covered her face, took the flag of the Sufi beggars and left her house.

One of the important persons in Baghdad was Mustafa, the chief of the Khalifa's guard. He drew a fat salary. His huge palace had a doorway made of sandalwood and locks and bolts made of silver. In addition to several worldly possessions he had very comely and young wife. Khatun was her name. Mustafa loved her so much that he did not take another wife even though Khatun did not give birth to any children. When other officers of the court came accompanied by their sons, Mustafa's heart ached with envy.

Khatun knew how her husband was yearning for children and she too suffered on that account. She took several medicines and underwent several treatments in order to beget children. But all her efforts were in vain.

Delilah came along the streets, crying, "Allah! Allah!" When she came near Mustafa's house she raised her head and saw Khatun at the upstairs window, decked in numberless gold orna-

ments and beautiful like a new bride. "If I do not rob this girl my wits are worthless", Delilah said to herself.

Seeing Delilah, Khatun thought, "This Sufi beggar may tell me some secret by which I can become a mother." She instructed her woman-slave to go and bring the Sufi beggar in.

When Delilah came up Khatun threw herself at her feet and told her about her unfulfilled desire.

"This is not a very great problem. There is a wise man in this very city who can give

excellent recipes for sterile women. Why don't you visit him once?" Delilah told Khatun.

"O, holy mother. I've never stepped out of this house either for complimenting or condoling. I do not know a single street in the city. How can I visit this wise man?" Khatun wailed.

"Then, you had better come with me. I shall take you to the wise man and bring you back before your husband returns home," Delilah said.

Glad of this opportunity Khatun put on the rest of her





jewellery too and followed Delilah. After walking for a while they reached the store of Sidi Muhsin, a young merchant. Sidi Muhsin was still a bachelor. On seeing him, Delilah had an idea. She asked Khatun to wait in front of the store and went in.

"That beautiful girl you see standing there is my daughter," Delilah told the young merchant. "I want to marry her off to a nice young man like you. Her father was a merchant, and he earned a good lot. You will lack nothing. I shall give you

enough dowry to open two more shops like this."

Sidi Muhsin was beside himself with joy. He said, "When shall we have the confirmation?"

"Right now, if you come with me," Delilah said. Sidi Muhsin took a bag of thousand dinars for any emergency and started.

As Delilah proceeded further she came to the work-shop of Haj Muhammed, the dyer. Leaving the two young people standing at the entrance, Delilah went in.

"Sir," she said to the dyer. "The boy and girl you see standing there are my son and daughter. Our house is so old that it threatens to collapse any minute. So we started repairing it. We want to shift to another house for four days. Can you suggest to me any house?"

The dyer thought for a while and said, "The upstairs portion of my house is quite unoccupied. I live downstairs, alone. I keep the upstairs for the indigo merchants who bring dyes to me in the season. You can occupy it till your house is repaired."

He gave her a bunch of keys. Delilah thanked the dyer and came out. She proceeded to the dyer's house, Khatun and the merchant following her. She signed to the young merchant to stay below and proceeded upstairs with the girl and said to her, "My child, the wise man resides down below. I shall tell him about you and come back. Meanwhile you may remove all your ornaments. It is not right that you go to the wise man with all this gold."

When Delilah came down Sidi Muhsin, asked her, "Let us proceed to confirm the marriage."

Delilah began to weep, saying, "What am I to do now? Some evil-minded people have put the notion into my daughter's head that you have got white spots and ringworm on your body. She believes that nonsense and flatly refuses to marry you. Remove your shirt and give it to me along with your bag, I shall keep them safe upstairs and send my daughter down to have a good look at your chest and back."



The young merchant accordingly removed his shirt and handed it over to the old woman along with his bag of dinars. Delilah again went upstairs and told Khatun, "Lucky girl! The wise man is waiting to see you. Go down, I shall lock up your ornaments and follow you."

Khatun went down and entered the rooms below. A minute later the old woman took both the bag of dinars and the bundle of ornaments and went away.

Khatun did not find any wise man below. She saw a man

without a shirt who told her, "Look, there is not the ghost of a spot on my body!" Khatun went upstairs frightened and bolted herself in. There was no trace of the Sufi beggar or her own precious ornaments.

Meanwhile Delilah deposited her loot in a certain shop known to her and went to the dyer. She said to him, "Sir, I thank you for the loan of your fine mansion. My children are very hungry. I request you to accept a dinar from me and take some bread and eatables to my child-

ren. They will be glad if you keep them company at lunch. In the meantime I shall shift my things from my house."

The dyer agreed to this. He put his assistant in charge of the shop and went away. Delilah too went away and returned with the loot. She told the shop assistant, "My dear man, your master is at the bread shop. He wants you to go to him at once. I shall look after the shop till you return."

The assistant had hardly left when Delilah began to collect



all portable and movable things and set them in a pile. This done, she called a boy passing on the road with a donkey and told him, "Do you know the owner of this shop? Well, he is my son. Creditors got him arrested. These things belong to the customers and I must return them at once. Will you be kind enough to lend me your donkey for a dinar? While I am away you can smash up the whole place so that the creditors will get nothing."

The boy readily agreed. The smashing up part of the bargain appealed to him greatly.

Now Delilah's work was done. She went home with the dyer's things on the donkey.

"What have you achieved, mother?" Zenab asked her.

"Well, I've fooled four persons. These are the ornaments of the wife of the chief of guards. Here are the shirt and money bag of a merchant. On the donkey you see the property of a dyer and the donkey itself belongs to the fourth person," Delilah told her daughter.



"O Mother, you are so clever. But you cannot go out into the street now. All of them will be looking for you," Zenab said.

"Don't be silly, my precious daughter. This is only the beginning," Delilah said.

While the dyer was purchasing bread his assistant arrived and asked why he was sent for. The dyer got suspicious and returned to his shop with his assistant, only to see the donkey-boy smashing up the whole shop.

"What are you doing, scoundrel?" the dyer shouted.

“Thank God that the creditors let you off. I am smashing up everything. Your mother told me to do it,” the boy said.

“What nonsense are you talking? My mother died a long time ago. Where is that old hag?” the dyer demanded.

“Where is my donkey then?” wailed the boy.

It was a long time before they understood each other. Meanwhile a huge crowd gathered to see the fun. Finally all of them went to the dyer’s house.

They saw Muhsin without his shirt and the dyer asked him, “Where is your mother?”

“My mother died long ago,” said the merchant. “The old woman promised to marry her daughter to me. They are both upstairs.”

The dyer went upstairs and knocked. Khatun opened the door. “Where is your mother?” he asked her. “My mother died a long time back,” the girl said.

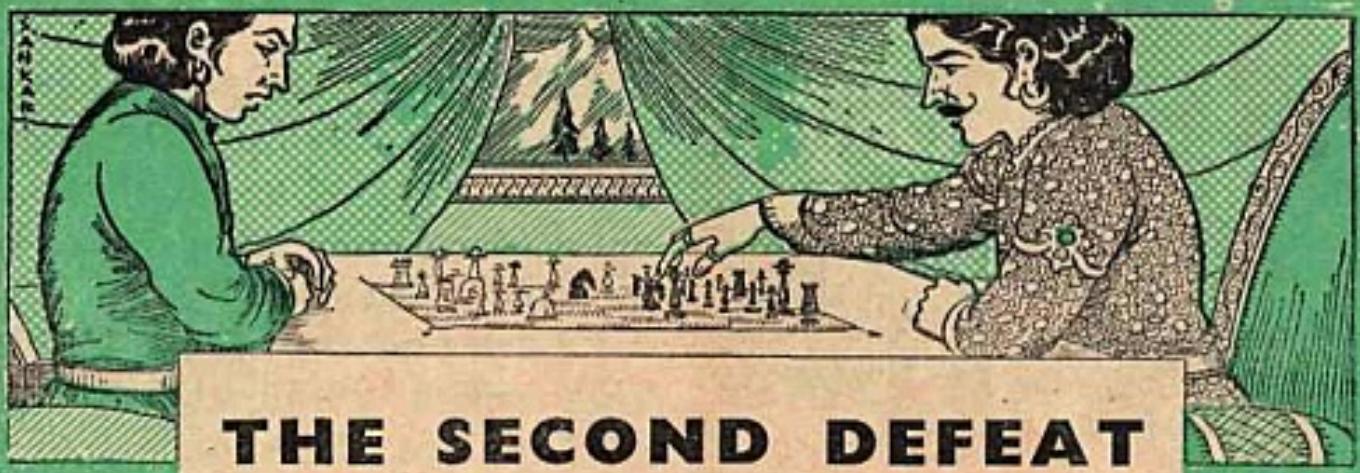
Only after the four victims compared their notes could they find out how they were duped by the same old woman. Having sent Khatun to her house, the other three went to see Khalid, the protector of the city.

Having listened to their extraordinary tale Khalid said, “I am sorry for you, good people. But it is not easy for me to find one old woman in all Baghdad. But, if you get hold of her, I promise to make her confess and punish her.”

Satisfied with this promise the three victims started in search of the crafty old woman.

*(To be Continued)*





## THE SECOND DEFEAT

THE King of Magadha was a Master of Chess. No one could match him at that game. Several champions of chess had played against him and lost.

In the course of time the king was convinced that nobody could defeat him in the game of chess.

To put a stop to the endless stream of players who were anxious to play him, the king declared that those who challenged him to a game of chess and got defeated would be beheaded.

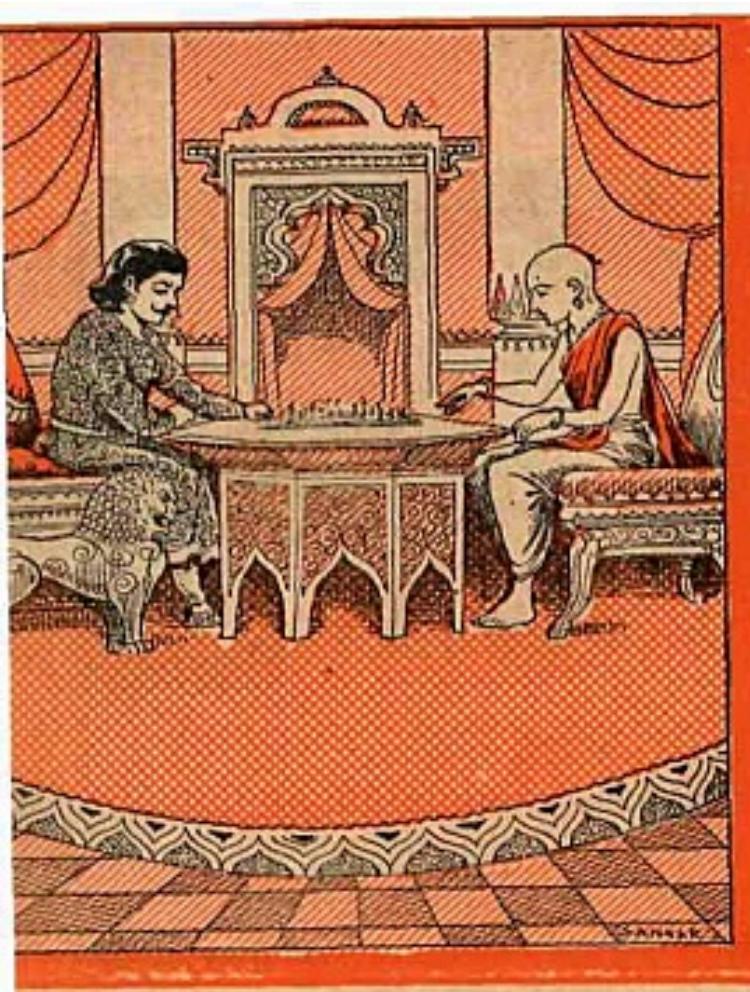
This declaration put an end to the stream of players who came from very distant parts of the country in order to have the credit of being defeated by the great Master of Chess. If now and then a player or two came with the hope of trying their

skill with him, the king reminded them of his declaration and persuaded them to go away.

Soon the king was left alone. If anyone wanted to have the pleasure of playing a game of chess with the king he had to pay for it with his head, and no one wanted to risk his head. It looked as though the king would never touch chessmen again.

At that time there lived a great mathematician on the banks of the Kaveri. He was very fond of the game of chess. He would watch the game for sometime and suddenly declare that the game could be concluded in so many moves. If given a chance he did it too.

This Brahman came to know about the king of Magadha.



What he heard made him angry. Why should the king be so vain about his victories? The joy of the game was in the play—not in victory. If two men played chess one of them was bound to be defeated. That did not mean that defeat was a crime to be punished with death. What sort of a player was the king?

The Brahman thought that the king of Magadha deserved to be taught a lesson. So he started out on foot and reached Magadha in the course of time. He saw the king and had a talk with him.

“O King,” he said, “I have come all the way from the banks of the Kaveri. I learnt that you are a Master of Chess, and came to witness you play.”

“I can understand that!” the king replied. “I am also anxious to play. But where is the man to play me? I have proclaimed that he who plays chess with me and loses the game will lose his head. So no one will play me.”

“In that case,” said the Brahman, “I’ll be glad to play you myself.”

“My friend,” the king said, “you’ll lose your head. Are you prepared for it?”

“Before I answer that question,” replied the Brahman, “I want to know something.”

“What is it you want to know?” the king asked.

“I shall lose my head if I am defeated,” the Brahman replied. “But what will I gain, if perchance, I defeat you?”

“To one who defeats me at chess I can give anything,” said the king boastfully. “What would you like to have?”

“Only paddy-grains,” replied the Brahman. “If I win, give me grains for all the 64 squares of the chess-board, doubling the number of grains from one square to another.”

“How simple-minded you are!” exclaimed the king. “Is that all you ask of me in case you defeat me? Evidently you have no hope of victory.”

“But I have!” said the Brahman. “I am hoping to defeat you *twice* with one game!”

“What do you mean by it?” the king asked surprised.

“You’ll know that after the game,” the Brahman replied.

The match was arranged on the following day. A good number of people came to see the game. Every one was certain that the Brahman would die.

The king played the match with a firm resolve to win and yet the Brahman defeated him in the end.

“Well, you win,” said the king sourly. “You *are* a good player. But, haven’t you said something about defeating me *twice*? Surely I’m defeated only once!”



“Give me what you have promised,” said the Brahman. “We can talk about your second defeat later.”

The king at once ordered for a few bags of paddy to be brought.

“I think,” said the Brahman, “it will be better if you calculate what is coming to me.”

The court accountants were summoned. They listened to all the conditions of the gift and, turning to the Brahman inquired, “How many grains do you want for the first square of the chess-board?”

“Oh, one will do,” replied the Brahman modestly.

The king laughed at the simplicity of the Brahman, but when the calculations were finished and the total figure was presented to him the king was astounded. The king owed the Brahman 18, 446, 744, 073, 709, 551, 615 grains!

“Tell me what it will amount to,” said the mystified king to his accountants.

Measures were brought and the number of grains per measure counted. Calculations went on and finally the accountants informed the king: “Sire, you owe this Brahman the entire paddy yield of our kingdom for two lakhs of years !”

The king was speechless with surprise and shame.

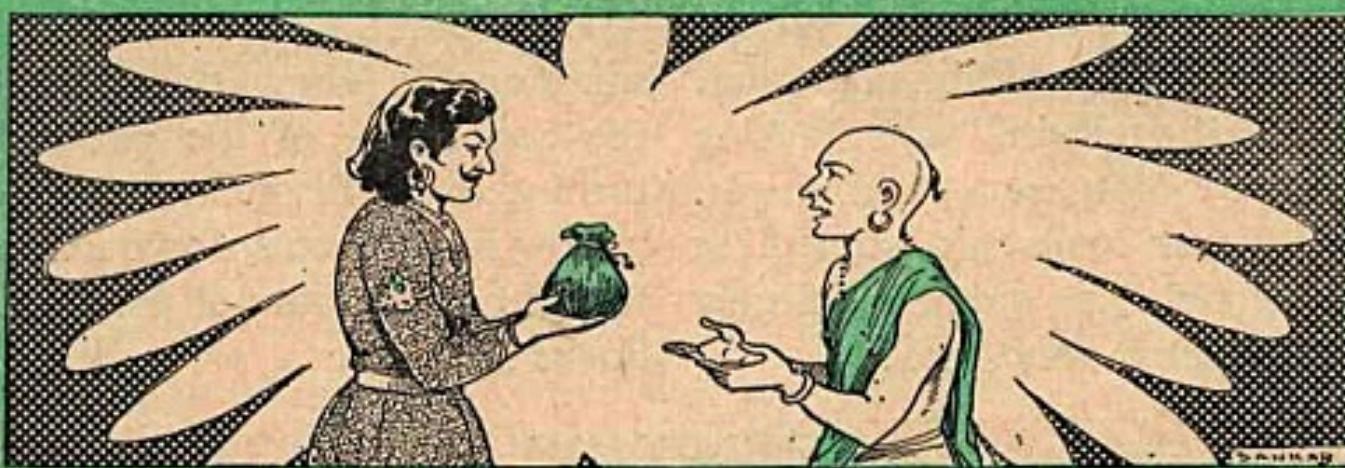
“Good gracious ! ” he said at last. “Is this my second defeat ?”

“I think so, Your Highness,” said the Brahman coolly. “If I was defeated I could have given my head easily enough. But having been defeated, you cannot give me what you promised.”

“It is all right now since you’ve won,” the king said. “But you were taking a terrible risk, weren’t you ?”

“I don’t think so,” replied the Brahman. “When you promised to give me what I asked for, I knew you were not clever at figures. Before I agreed to the death-penalty, I made sure that you will *not* win.”

The king was surprised at the shrewdness of the Brahman. He loaded him with all sorts of gifts and sent him away.



## The Farmer Who Waited in Vain

ONCE upon a time, there was a farmer who owned almost two acres of land and lived quite well. One day, when he was on his way to plough, he saw a rabbit running so fast that it crashed into a tree and fell dead.

"That's fine!" thought the farmer to himself. "I can get rabbits without doing any work. What an easy way to live!"

He laid his plough and hoe aside, and let his fields run wild. Every day, he just sat beside the tree and waited for rabbits to come and knock themselves to death.

He waited day after day, while the peasants around him gathered in their harvests. But no rabbit ever hit the tree again.

## The Spear and the Shield

LONG, long ago, in the land of Chu, there was a man who made shields and spears. "Buy my shields!" he would say. "They are very strong. Nothing in the world can penetrate them!"

He also lauded his spears, saying: "My spears are the sharpest in the world. They are so sharp they can pierce anything!"

One day someone asked him: "If we use one of your spears to pierce one of your shields, what then?"

The man from the land of Chu could find no answer.



## ONE IN A MILLION!

MAHA SHIVA-RATHRI is a very sacred day for the Hindus.

On the morning of that day they go to the sea-shore in hundreds of thousands and take a religious bath.

On one such occasion a certain Brahman went to bathe in the sea. It was very early in the morning and the beach was not crowded. But soon people would be coming in large crowds. The Brahman had a copper vessel and he was afraid that someone would take it if he left it on the sand. So he thought of a way to conceal the vessel until he finished his bath. He put the vessel on the ground and covered it with a small mound of sand which looked like a Shiva *Linga*.

But, having finished his bath he came back and found to his horror thousands and thousands of similar mounds all over the beach. The innumerable bathers who arrived after the Brahman saw the mound, thought it was a *Linga* of sand prescribed by the ritual, and made similar *Lingas* before they went in to bathe.

In fine the Brahman lost his vessel as surely as if it was stolen.



## THE EARTH



WE have already learnt something about Mercury and Venus, the planets nearest to the Sun. As we go away from the Sun, the Earth is the planet we come across next. Naturally we know more about the Earth than any other planet.

The Earth is about 93 million miles away from the Sun, and the Sun's light, travelling at the rate of about 186,000 miles per second, takes some 8 minutes to reach the Earth.

The Earth is almost a perfect sphere; its equatorial diameter is 7,927 miles whereas its polar diameter is only 27 miles less. Similarly the equatorial circumference is 24,902 miles while the polar circumference is only 42 miles less.

The surface area of the Earth is about 197 million square miles. Of this over 139 million (about 71 per cent) is water and the rest is land.

The volume of the Earth is nearly 260 thousand million cubic miles; its weight 6,000 million million tons.

The orbit of the Earth round the Sun is 580 million miles. In this orbit the Earth moves at a speed of 18 miles a second (66,000 miles an hour), making a full round in 365 days 6 hours and 9 minutes. That is a year for us.

The Moon is the only satellite of the Earth—its only child. It is believed that the Moon was once part of the Earth and it was separated while the Earth was still a ball of fire. It is probable that the Moon was much nearer to the Earth in the beginning. Even now it has not gone very far, its distance from the earth is only ten times the circumference of the Earth.

Of all the planets the Earth seems to be the best suited for life. Not only does it contain an atmosphere which is congenial to life, but also its distance from the Sun is just right for life. Whereas the nearer planets get too much heat and light from the Sun the farther planets are virtually in darkness and cold.

## ANCIENT ANIMALS

*Eohippus* was an ancient animal about the size of a fox. It had a few stiff hairs on its neck, a small tail, a short neck, teeth good enough for chewing tender leaves, and flat feet which enabled it to move comfortably in swamps. Its fore feet had four toes and the hind ones three toes.

Gradually conditions changed, the swamps dried up and the earth became hard. *Eohippus* too changed and became *Mesohippus*. It was now as big as a bird dog. It had a mane on its neck, and its tail was longer. All its feet carried three toes, but the middle toe was much bigger than the other toes. This toe had a thick nail—the beginning of a hoof.

Conditions on earth kept changing. In the western part of America where *Mesohippus* lived, climate became very dry. The woodlands disappeared giving place to grasslands. And *Mesohippus* kept changing, till it was quite tall and fast, running on feet with only one toe with a real hoof. The other two toes were still there, but they did not touch the ground. It was now *Protohippus* which changed further and became the horse we see today !

Similarly we can trace the evolution of the elephant also. 50 million years ago its ancestor was of the size of a pig. It had two prominent sharp-pointed teeth in its upper jaw. Gradually this creature grew larger and the two large teeth grew into tusks. Also its upper jaw grew into a trunk.

2 million years ago most of the earth was covered with ice and the *Ice Age* began. At that time two types of ancestors of the elephant existed on earth. One was the *Mastodon*, with a woolly coat. The other was the *Mammoth*. Pre-historic man lived with and hunted these extinct animals. He left pictures of these creatures for us to see.

# PHOTO CAPTION COMPETITION

MAY 1956

::

AWARD Rs. 10/-



- ★ Choose apt and significant captions for the above pair of photos. The captions should go in a pair, either words, phrases or short sentences.
- ★ The captions should reach us before 10th of March '56.

- The pair of captions considered best will be awarded Rs. 10/-
- ★ Please write legibly or type the captions on a postcard and address it to: "Chandamama Photo Caption Competition," Madras-26.

## RESULTS FOR MARCH

- I. *Photo : Outdoor Drill*
- II. *Photo : Indoor Thrill*

*Contributed by :*

P. N. VISWANATH BACHU, Taikalwadi, Shivaji Park, Bombay-16

AWARD Rs. 10



## Prof: P. C. SORCAR

MAKING a lady vanish while she is sitting on a chair under cover of an ordinary sheet of cloth is a very clever illusion. It was first shown in Europe and the famous American magician, Hermann the Great, made it famous in his country with his superb presentation.

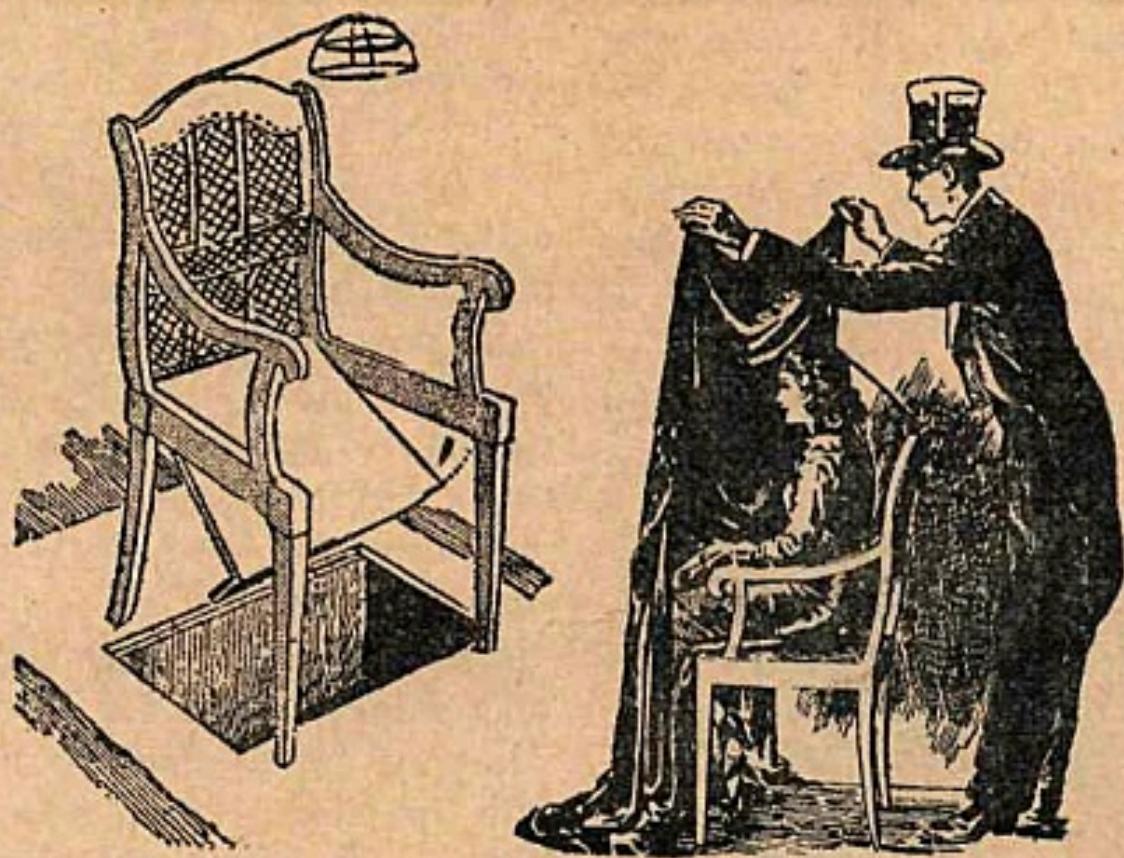
On the stage floor rests an ordinary chair. At the bottom of this an ordinary sheet of newspaper is kept spread. Next a lady (the magician's lady assistant) is asked to sit on that chair and the magician covers her with a very big sheet of white cloth. Afterwards the magician says "One, two, three" and takes off the sheet to show that the lady behind it has disappeared into thin air. The empty chair and the newspaper sheet are both visible but the

girl is gone. Everybody is startled to see this wonderful feat.

To perform the illusion, the magician must prepare the stage beforehand. There should be a trap in the stage floor through which the girl will make her easy get-away. There is a wooden lid fitted in the trap which will open downwards. The assistant below stage opens the trap for the girl who will disappear from the chair. The chair is a specially prepared one. Its seat can be dropped downwards as shown in the diagram. There is a wire frame in the back of the chair which can be brought towards front or can be dropped down towards the back. When it is brought to the front it falls on the head of the lady. When the sheet is dropped on the head of the lady it actually falls on this

wire frame and gives the shape of a human head and a complete illusion is created. The audience think that this is the head of the girl on whom the sheet rests but in reality this wire frame is giving the shape of the lady's head though the lady has gone

the spectators. The lady, in the meantime, goes through the trap-door either to her dressing room or to the auditorium unnoticed by everybody to reappear at the call from the magician. This item must be practised many times on the



out through the stage trap beneath her.

The rest is easy; while the magician removes the sheet he takes it towards the back of the chair and as a result the wire frame automatically goes behind the chair unseen by

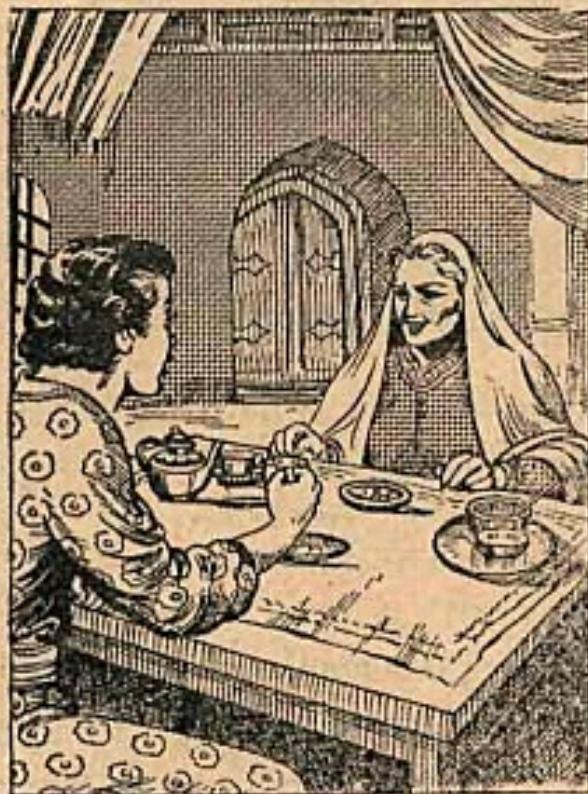
stage to make it perfect. Otherwise the audience will at once understand the trick and the performer will not be able to get away with it. All illusions like this require good assistants and constant practising for successful results.

## THE BACK COVER

### KING FOR A DAY - 1

WHILE Harun al-Rashid was Khalifa of Baghdad, there lived a strange bachelor in that city. His name was Abu al-Hasan. With his mother he lived a secluded life. He invited to his table only strangers. Even the stranger was never invited a second time.

Every evening Abu waited on the bridge at the end of



the city and, when he saw a stranger coming, he accosted him with smiles and said, "sir, you shall be my guest tonight." Then he took the stranger home, treated him like a prince, fed him sumptuously and provided him with a feather bed. But the next morning he told his guest, "Sir, I stood host to you when you had not a friend in Baghdad. Even God cannot be my guest a second time. So from now on we are strangers to each other. If by any chance we happen to meet in the street I am not going to recognise you, and you shall treat me likewise."

One day, at sunset, Abu was standing near the bridge when he saw a man coming into the city. He was dressed like a rich Mosul merchant. Behind him walked a tall slave. The Mosul merchant was none other than the Khalifa who was in the habit of going about in disguise once in a month.

Not knowing this, Abu approached the Khalifa and

said, "Sir, I pray that you come to my house and be my guest for the night." The Khalifa appeared to hesitate at first and then agreed.

Abu's mother cooked very nice dishes and placed them before the guest as well as her son. After food Abu brought very rich and rare drinks and offered them to his guest.

While they drank and conversed, Abu told his guest about himself, thus :

"They call me Abu al-Hasan. My father who was a merchant brought me up with such rigid discipline that, on his death, I was tempted to lead a life of ease and pleasure. But I took one precaution, I divided my entire property into two equal parts and converted one part only into cash. Then I began to spend this cash in drinking, eating and other pleasures. I had a lot of friends and the money was soon spent. As soon as the money disappeared, those whom I looked upon as my dearest friends, also disappeared. Even when I

went in search of them I could not see them.

"I understood what friendship was. Yet I still yearned for friends. But I had taken an oath that I shall never make friends with familiar people. I seek friends among strangers. The friendship lasts only a day. I never give it a chance to be tarnished.

"So I shall bid you goodbye in the morning. Even if we happen to meet again I shall not recognise you, and you should not take it in bad part." *(To be Continued)*





## NEWS ITEMS

On January 11, Dr. B. V. Keskar, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, inaugurated a 20 K. W. Medium-wave transmitter at Avadi, near Madras. It was the third 20 K. W. transmitter to be opened during the financial year, as part of the development programme of A. I. R.

\* \* \*

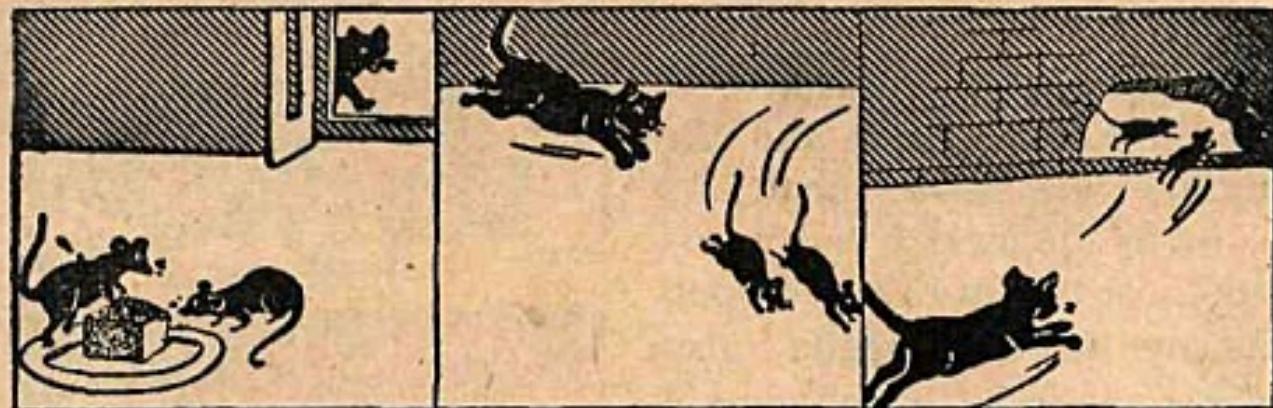
The Planning Commission has allocated Rs. 320 crores for the entire educational programme under the Second Five-year Plan. The Educational Ministry had asked for at least Rs. 512 crores.

\* \* \*

For the first time *Bhagavadgita* has been translated into Russian from Sanskrit, by Prof. Smirnov of the Turkmen Republic. It will be published this year. The three previous translations were done from European language editions of *Bhagavadgita*.

\* \* \*

The 2500th Buddha anniversary will be celebrated in May next, in Bihar at Bodh Gaya, about 40 miles from Patna. All Buddhist countries are helping India Government to fix the programme.



On January 19 the President promulgated an ordinance by which all insurance business in the country was brought under the management of the Government with immediate effect. The shareholders of the various insurance companies are to be compensated.

\* \* \*

On January 26, Republic Day, the President awarded titles to 25 persons. Padma Vibhushan was conferred on three, including Mr. C. M. Trivedi. Among those who received the title of Padma Bhushan were Mr. K. Srinivasan, Editor, The Hindu, Srimati Rukmini Devi, Col. C. K. Naidu, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi and others.

\* \* \*

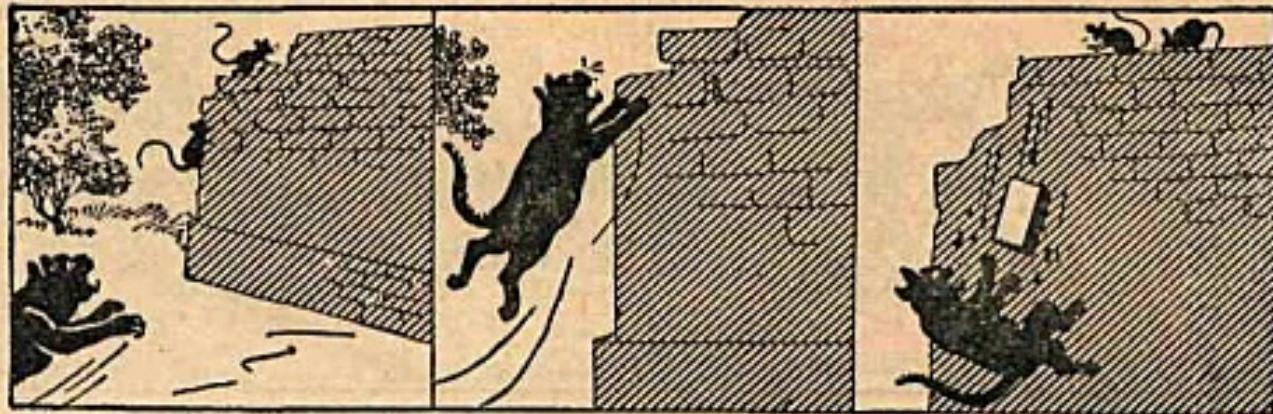
Grants amounting to Rs. 6,34 000 have been sanctioned to the States of Mysore, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, West Bengal, Punjab and Hyderabad for the development of silk industry.

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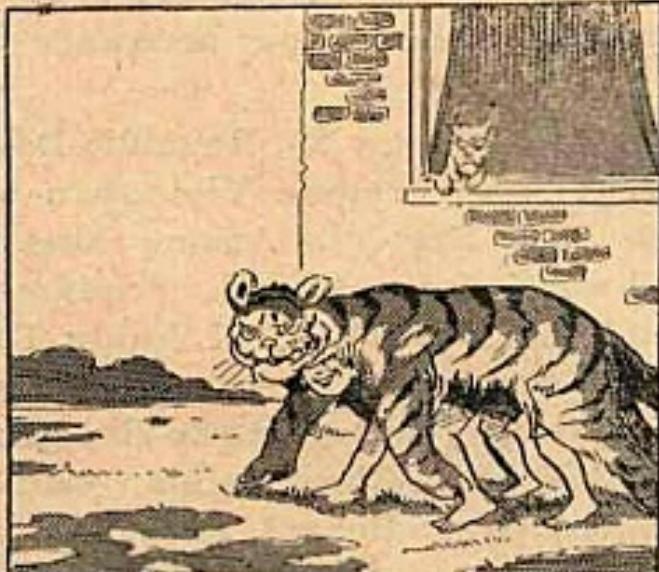
On February 3, Mr. V. K. Krishna Menon was appointed as a Cabinet Minister to assist the Prime Minister in the conduct of foreign affairs.

\* \* \*

Prof. P. C. SORCAR, the Great Indian Magician has been in Europe giving his shows in cities like Paris, Rouen, Boulogne etc. From France his troupe went to Belgium where they opened their shows in Ostende on 24th January in the presence of the Mayor and his wife. Mr. Sorcar's performances have created a sensation everywhere. His tour will include Germany and England.



## Picture Story



ONE day Dass and Vass decided to play at tigers. This was easy because there was a complete tiger skin in Vass' house. Both the boys went under the skin and began to walk about purring like a real tiger. "Tiger" who happened to come through the window saw this and was frightened at first. But soon he got on to the trick and began to bark so loudly that Dass and Vass were scared out of their wits.

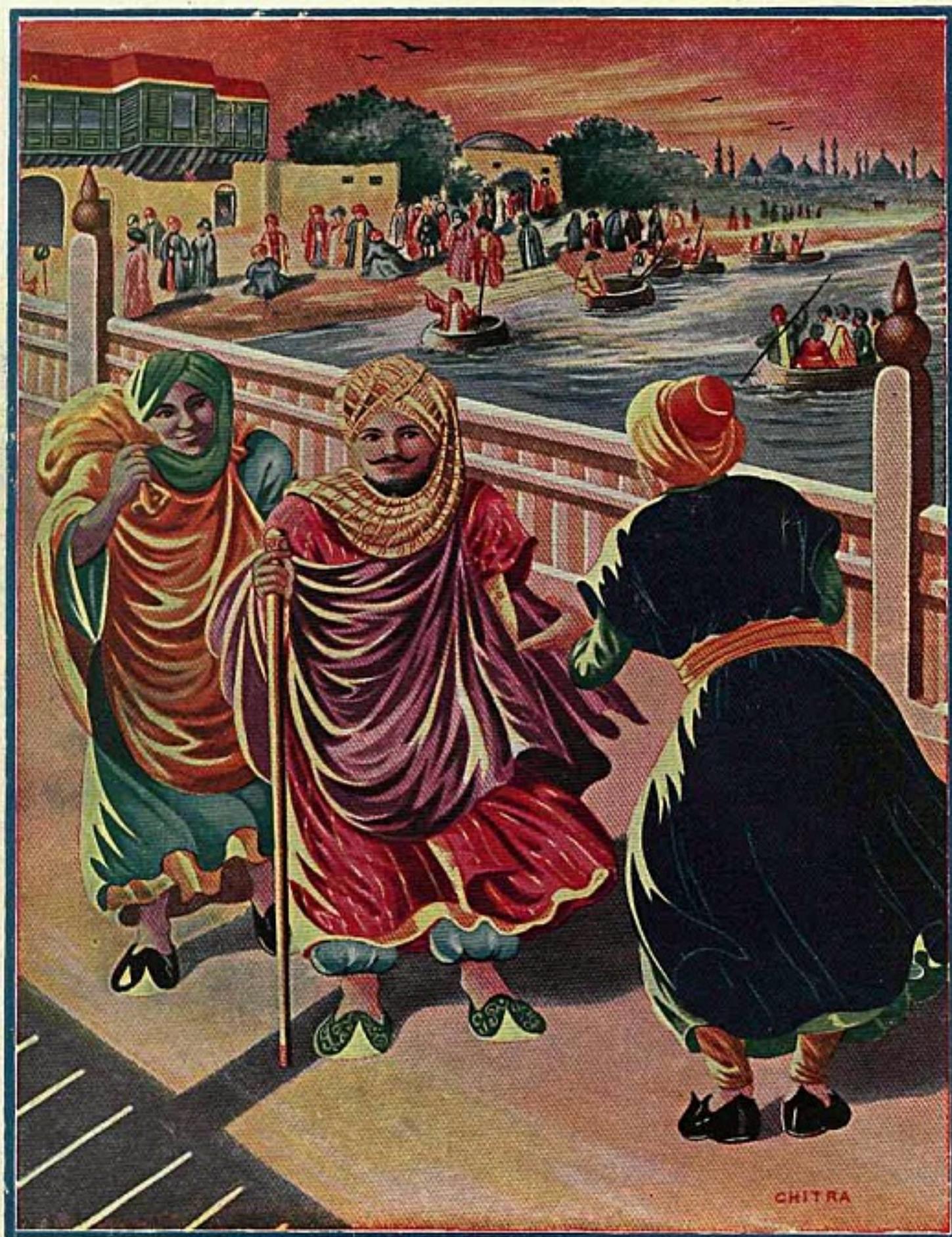




Winning  
Caption

**INDOOR THRILL**

Contributed by  
P. N. Vishwanath Bachu, Bombay-16



CHITRA